

Message Text

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15

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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R 161620Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2104

INFO USNATO BRUSSELS 2457

USMISSION USUN NY

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

UNCLAS COPENHAGEN 2697

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, DA, UR

SUBJ: DENMARK'S SAKHAROV COMMITTEE HOLDS PRESS

CONFERENCE TO REMIND OF 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF ERECTION
OF BERLIN WALL

REF: COPENHAGEN 3113 DTG 221620Z OCT 75

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SUMMARY: DENMARK SAKHAROV COMMITTEE HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE AUGUST 12 JOINTLY WITH THE WEST GERMAN REFUGEE GROUP "ARBEITSGEMEINSCHAFT 13 AUGUST". CONFERENCE DREW ATTENTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN EAST GERMANY AND AGAIN FOCUSED DANISH PRESS ATTENTION ON SITUATION THERE. EVENT WAS HELD ON 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF ERECTION OF BERLIN WALL. END SUMMARY.

1. THE DENMARK SAKHAROV COMMITTEE HELD A SECOND HEARING - ACTUALLY A PRESS CONFERENCE - IN COPENHAGEN ON AUGUST 12, 1976 TOGETHER WITH THE WEST BERLIN REFUGEE ORGANIZATION "ARBEITSGEMEINSCHAFT 13 AUGUST". THE SUBJECT OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE WAS "HUMAN RIGHTS IN EAST GERMANY".

2. THE PRESS CONFERENCE WAS HELD IN THE PRESTIGIOUS D'ANGLETERRE HOTEL AND WAS ATTENDED BY A LARGE NUMBER OF REPORTERS FROM MOST WEST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. TWO ESCAPED EAST GERMAN BORDER GUARDS AND A MARRIED COUPLE WHO WERE IMPRISONED FOR ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE CAME TO SPEAK AT THE CONFERENCE. THE PRESS CONFERENCE CHAIRMEN WERE OVID FELDTSTED ANDREASEN, CHAIRMAN OF THE DENMARK SAKHAROV COMMITTEE, AND DR. RAINER HILDEBRANDT OF THE GERMAN ORGANIZATION.

3. THE CONFERENCE, WHICH MARKED THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ERECTION OF THE BERLIN WALL, RECEIVED WIDE COVERAGE IN THE DANISH PRESS. PRELIMINARY PRESS COVERAGE FOCUSED ON THE EFFORT OF THE ORGANIZERS TO BRING INTO DENMARK A SO-CALLED "EAST GERMAN DEATH AUTOMAT", WHICH IS ONE OF THE MANY AUTOMATIC FIRING DEVICES WHICH IT IS CLAIMED EAST GERMANY HAS PLACED ALONG THE BORDER. THE DANISH MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, HOWEVER, REFUSED TO GRANT A WAIVER TO PERMIT THE IMPORTATION OF THIS DEVICE.

4. THE CONFERENCE FEATURED TESTIMONY BY THE FORMER BORDER GUARDS CONCERNING THEIR INSTRUCTIONS TO SHOOT ANYONE ATTEMPTING TO FLEE EAST GERMANY. THE COUPLE WHO WERE IN PRISON, MR AND MRS WOLFGANG DIETRICH, DESCRIBED PRISON CONDITIONS IN EAST GERMANY IN GRAPHIC TERMS AND DR. HEILDEBRANDT DISCUSSED THE PRACTICE OF PURCHASING THE UNCLASSIFIED

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FREEDOM OF POLITICAL PRISONERS.

5. THE CONFERENCE ONCE AGAIN EFFECTIVELY FOCUSED ATTENTION ON THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN EAST GERMANY, A SUBJECT WHICH HAS NOT RECEIVED MUCH PRESS ATTENTION HERE. OF COURSE, THE STATEMENTS IN ITALY OF THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST TRUCK DRIVER BENITO CORGHI'S WIDOW, CALLING THE EAST GERMANY SYSTEM ABSURD, WERE MENTIONED AND ADDED TO THE

IMPACT.

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